



May 2008

Welcome to the thirty-first edition of the **MassGIS GISette**, a bi-monthly newsletter e-mailed to over 1600 of our users and partner agencies to keep them informed of data updates, GIS events, and on-going technology developments. This newsletter will not replace more focused e-mails that many of you currently receive. A page on our website has been created for the [GISette](#). There you will find back issues of the GISette and an [online subscription form](#).

While our primary intent in publishing the GISette is to disseminate information related to MassGIS initiatives and data development in particular, we also see the GISette as a means of communicating public agency GIS news. So we encourage readers to send in updates or announcements concerning public agencies that they would like included in the GISette. We particularly want to encourage submission of announcements concerning data development projects. Announcements should be sent to Paul Nutting at paul.nutting@state.ma.us.

2005 Land Use Update

The project to update the statewide land use map based on the 2005 imagery is proceeding well. We have received draft data for about 7,500 sq. km in the southeast, and by the time you read this, we will have received more than 12,000 sq. km., including Cape Cod and the Islands and a portion of Metro-West Boston. We would like to thank staff at several of the regional planning agencies who are assisting by reviewing the data and adding a stronger element of local knowledge to the review. We are pleased with the boundaries being mapped, with the buffer rules being employed in the semi-automated process the vendor is using, and with the use of parcel data (where available) as supporting information for the interpretations being made.

MassGIS and the 2010 Federal Census

In preparation for the 2010 federal census, MassGIS has entered into a partnership with the Secretary of the Commonwealth and the Census Bureau to provide GIS support for the Local Update of Census Addresses (LUCA) and Boundary Annexation Survey (BAS) projects.

LUCA Project -- MassGIS staff assisted the Secretary's office in locating more than 100,000 addresses that did not appear in the Census Master Address File but were on the voter registration list that the Secretary of the Commonwealth maintains. The census tract and block IDs for those addresses were delivered to the Census Bureau to ensure that residents at those addresses would be counted. An accurate population count is essential for determining the Commonwealth's congressional representation and its eligibility for hundreds of millions of dollars in federal aid. This is especially urgent because Massachusetts may be at risk of losing a seat in the Congress.

BAS Project -- The Census Bureau recently began distributing corrected versions of [2000 TIGER and census geography in shape file format](#). Massachusetts, along with every other state in the nation, had its boundaries of census geography realigned to a more geographically accurate base map. In Massachusetts, MassGIS worked closely with the Census Bureau's Boston Regional Office to ensure that more accurate geographic features (e.g., roads) available through MassGIS were incorporated into the census geography. The greater accuracy of the new census geography will be particularly

noticeable when using census data together with municipal data.

While reviewing an initial release of the new census geography, Dan Marrier at MassGIS discovered there are many locations statewide where municipal boundaries had been erroneously shifted as part of the incorporation of more accurate features. To alleviate the burden of 351 disparate community efforts to resolve this issue, MassGIS will be performing the spatial analyses and providing the data necessary to fix this error and enhance the overall accuracy of the Census Minor Civil Divisions (MCD - the formal terminology for a town, city, or tribal entity). MassGIS, in collaboration with the Survey Section at MassHighway, will be working with the Census Bureau to use the [municipal boundaries derived from surveyed locations](#) as the basis for corrections to the MCD boundaries. Although the Census Bureau documentation states they will not accept "small" corrections (defined as those within 30 feet of their existing Census boundary counterparts), we hope to increase the MCD boundary accuracy to match the survey-level accuracy as much as possible. If any municipality believes its boundaries are incorrectly represented by more than 30 feet in the boundary data being distributed by MassGIS, please contact MassGIS Asst. Director [Neil MacGaffey](#) (617-626-1057). Note that municipal boundary changes are not official until both the affected communities and the state legislature have approved them.

Geocoding for Massachusetts Agencies and Municipalities – Data Update

MassGIS continues to work with the [Statewide Emergency Telecommunications Board](#) to update the [NAVTEQ](#) geocoding files for Massachusetts. After notifying NAVTEQ of missing streets and other data issues, NAVTEQ researches the issues and resolves them in subsequent releases.

Beginning May 15th, all new requests for the Navteq street data by state agencies and municipalities will be fulfilled with the 4th Quarter 2007 version of the NAVTEQ data. The current version being distributed is 4th Quarter 2006, so this new release contains one year of updates. Particular focus has been put on all counties *except for* Bristol, Norfolk, and Plymouth because major updates for these three counties were included in the Q4 2006 version. As staff time permits, current users in the affected counties will be sent the new datasets, beginning with statewide entities.

As a reminder, the [Executive Office of Transportation](#) has purchased an enterprise license for the NAVTEQ geocoding files for Massachusetts. The license allows these files to be used by any Massachusetts government agency or political subdivision, including commissions, boards, regional agencies, authorities, and cities and towns; however, the NAVTEQ files remain the property of NAVTEQ and may not be distributed to outside entities or for any commercial or mobile purposes. MassGIS has been distributing these data, which are available in a shapefile format or as a personal geodatabase. To facilitate the receipt of the data, an organization must first identify a Technical Contact (usually a GIS person) and a Signatory, who should be at the highest supervisory level possible in order to cover the most possible users. If you would like to learn more about this valuable database, view FAQ's and technical documents, and download the license agreement and signature page, please [visit our website](#). Please direct any inquiries to paul.nutting@state.ma.us.

MassGIS-Northeast to Northwest

In April, Sean Sweeney, who manages the update of roads at MassGIS for the [Statewide Emergency Telecommunications Board](#) (SETB), presented at the URISA/NENA Addressing Conference in Portland, Oregon.

This conference brings together the experts in addressing and geocoding from [URISA \(Urban and Regional Information Systems Association\)](#) and the emergency center data and management experts from [NENA \(National Emergency Number Association\)](#). The central theme of the conference from the point of view of MassGIS and the SETB was the importance of having a clean and comprehensive Master Address File (MAF) for emergency response and being able to validate GIS mapping data against this MAF. Having these data for emergency response also creates countless benefits for other applications. There were several sessions at the conference related to achieving these goals and

measuring your success.

URISA has also worked closely with the [Federal Geographic Data Committee \(FGDC\)](#) to create a [Street Address Data Standard](#) which is nearing final approval. The contents of this standard provided another core theme for the conference. MassGIS would like to use this standard as the basis for a statewide address data standard, which will help us to reach the goal of having a statewide MAF.

Sean's presentation described the project that MassGIS is doing for SETB and how the cooperation of three state agencies and a private company came together to make this project happen. It also included some details of the trials and tribulations of the project. The presentation can be viewed [here](#).

Database Updates

- **[Schools Layer Updated](#) - 4/10/2008**
This dataset, with points representing pre-kindergarten through secondary schools, has been updated based on MA Dept. of Education database listings as of December 2007. Along with the addition of new schools and the removal of closed facilities, MassGIS undertook an extensive review and adjusted the placement of many points based on 2005 ortho imagery.
- **State [House](#) and [Senate](#) Districts Layers Updated - 3/24/2008**
Attribute changes were made to the polygon layers based on recent special elections.

New on the MassGIS Web Site:

- **[MACC 2008 Presentation](#) - 3/1/2008**
Web PowerPoint presentation entitled "GIS data and technology for Conservation Commissions," from the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions (MACC) 2008 Annual Environmental Conference. Works best with Internet Explorer.

Staff News and Meeting Announcements

Employment Opportunities at MassGIS

MassGIS is currently accepting applications for four positions:

- Open Space Database Administrator - deadline: May 16, 2008
- GIS Applications Programmer - deadline: May 16, 2008
- Two Open Space Technicians – deadline May 6.

Short descriptions of all these positions as well as links to the full posting with information on how to apply can be found on the MassGIS web site [Jobs page](#).

Massachusetts Geographic Information Council Seminar Series

View PowerPoint presentations from past meetings [here](#), including the latest "CAD meets GIS" presentations.

Spring NEARC 2008

Northeast Arc Users Group spring conference.
Tuesday, May 13, 2008, Smith College Campus Center, Northampton, MA.
The link above provides more information.

Any comments or suggestions about the GISette are welcome – send to paul.nutting@state.ma.us.

MassGIS-The Commonwealth's Office of Geographic and Environmental Information is located within the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs and is charged with the collection, enhancement, storage and dissemination of the Commonwealth's geographic data.

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